had been so far futile, he requested a sympathetic consideration. Another need of the ryots of Mavelikara was the improvement of the canal leading from the Kulakada river to the Tazhakara punja fields. That channel formerly used for irrigation and commercial purposes had become silted up. The length of the channel was only 1½ miles and the cost of improving it might not exceed Rs. 3,000. Another important need of the place was a manure depot in a convenient locality near the Mavelikara Arattukadavu.

Dewan's reply.—Dr. Kunjen Pillai tells me that a private person has undertaken to open a manure depot on the agency system. It is much easier to start private depots by giving a certain amount as commission. In that way we can establish more depots. As regards the other points some of them are very important. I intend visiting Mavelikara and acquainting myself with the conditions of the locality. I shall consider these points after my inspection.

49. Need for establishing a Veterinary Hospital at Punalur.

Mr. Kanakku Padmanabhon Narayanan (Member, Pattanapuram Taluk) stated that, in reply to his representation on the same subject at the 16th session of the Assembly, he was told that it would be referred to the Director of Agriculture for an expression of his views. As the result of that reference, the Director of Agriculture recommended the opening of a Veterinary hospital at Shencottah and his recommendation was sanctioned by Government. The Member said that several heads of cattle were being imported from the British Districts *via* Punalur and that the establishment of a Veterinary hospital at that place, as suggested by him, would greatly tend to arrest the spread of any epedemic disease from which such cattle might happen to suffer. He doubted whether a hospital at Shencottah could possibly serve the end in view and suggested that, if a new hospital could not be opened, the existing one at Quilon might be shifted to Punalur.

Dewan's reply.—I shall come to Punalur soon, and I shall see the place and then consider the question. As regards the opening of the Veterinary hospital at Shencottah, it was thought that as it is a frontier town and as the cattle pass through that place into the State, the diseased cattle could be treated there before they come into Travancore. It was with that object that orders were passed to open a hospital at Shencottah. But the hospital itself has not yet been opened. After visiting Punalur I shall dispose of the question.

50. The Punja system of cultivation, its disadvantages and the necessity for a change in the attitude of Government towards the Punja ryots.

Mr. P. K. Narayana Aiyar (Member, Ambalapuzha taluk) represented that there were extensive tracts of tax-paying punja lands in Kuttanad and other places in the State; and that, though much revenue was being derived from them, the Government had been so far extending only a step-motherly attention towards punja cultivators as distinguished from nanja cultivators for whose benefit large sums had been spent in the past on such irrigation works as the Kodayar project, &c. Punja lands formed an important asset and, if they could be made cultivable annually instead of biennially as now, the necessity for the import of foreign paddy for consumption was bound to cease. These water-logged lands lay submerged in water and as such no ploughing worth mentioning was done on such lands. In cultivating these lands ring-bunds had to be put up and water from the fields pumped out at the joint expense of the cultivators who in many cases owned a continuous belt of land in small plots. For want of sufficient co-operation among the ryots, it had been found difficult either to put up bunds in time or to recover the proportionate cost of putting up such bunds and pumping out water, from the individual owners. In many cases, the bunds put up were not sufficiently strong for want of shrub and grass necessary for their construction. Punja lands depended for their manure on the silt brought down by rivers and canals, but those had now been blocked up by mud or had been encroached upon by the adjoining land-owners. Artificial manures were, if at all, rarely

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